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Revere Man Convicted of Setting Fire to Home with Wife and Children Inside

State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan, Revere Fire Chief Eugene W. Doherty, and Suffolk District Attorney Daniel F. Conley announced the successful prosecution of John M. Lewis of Revere for burning of dwelling, malicious destruction of property and violation of a restraining order. Lewis was sentenced to 2 ½ years in the county House of Correction.

In the early morning hours of June 16, 2005, Lewis went to his family's home at 228 Lincoln St. in Revere – in violation of a restraining order his wife had obtained against him – and poured gasoline outside the sliding glass doors. Lewis then used a cigarette lighter to ignite the gasoline and left the area. His 8-year-old son and 11-year-old daughter were asleep inside and his wife had just gone to bed herself when the smoke alarms alerted her to the fire.

An investigation by state and local fire and police officials determined that the fire was set with an accelerant and identified Lewis as the arsonist. Authorities arrested him later that same day at the Town Line Motel in Malden where he was living.

"I am very pleased at the level of cooperation and professionalism of our Fire Investigator Jay Mazzola and State Police Trooper Donald Bossi of the State Fire Marshal's Office for investigating this arson fire of potential horrendous consequences," Chief Doherty said. "The quick arrest of the individual responsible prevented further crimes against his own family and possibly other citizens of our community."

State Fire Marshal Coan said, "This case effectively used the team-concept of fire investigation and one of our most remarkable tools – an accelerant detection canine – who showed investigators where to take samples that were later confirmed by the lab to contain gasoline."

District Attorney Conley praised the professionalism of the State Fire Marshal's Office and Revere Fire and Police Departments in following evidence that identified the cause of the fire and the person responsible. "The excellent work done by the investigators in the field and in the laboratory allowed us to hold this defendant accountable in a court of law," Conley said.

The fire was investigated by the Revere Fire Department, the Revere Police Department, and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal. The Office of Suffolk District Attorney successfully prosecuted the case.